



*Hamilton  
Historical Society*



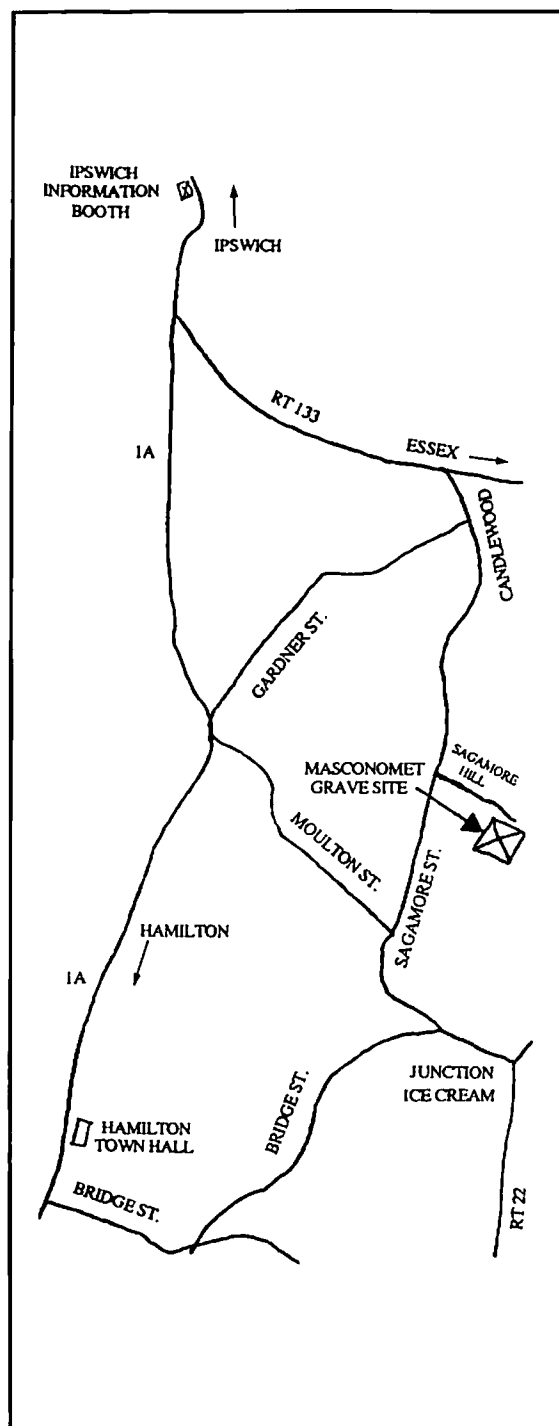
SOCIETY ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 108

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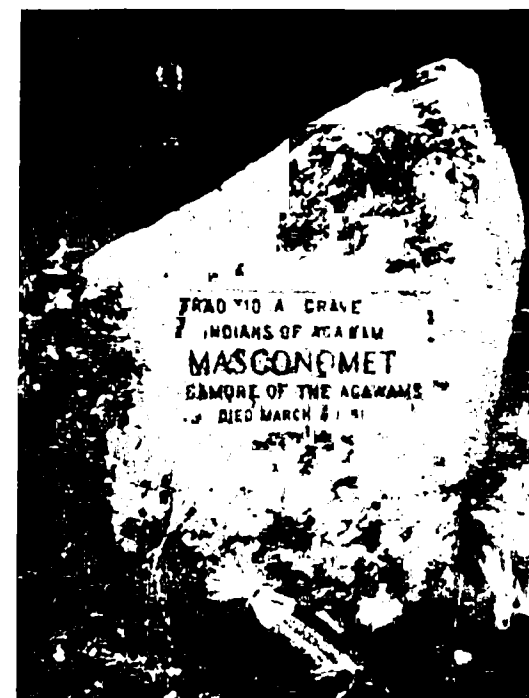
*Town Incorporated*

*June 21, 1793*



## **MASCONOMET CHIEF OF THE AGAWAMS**

Location and history  
of the gravesite



**Sagamore Hill**  
**Hamilton, Massachusetts**

## **A brief history of the Agawams and Masconomet**

A peaceful but powerful Sachem who ruled his people, the Agawams, in the lands of Essex County from Newbury to Haverhill to Beverly and all the Cape Ann to the Atlantic Ocean.

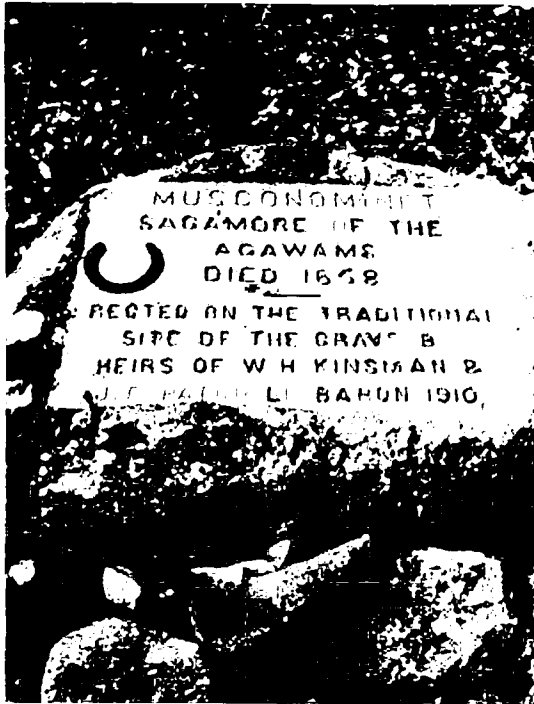
The Agawams were decimated by a plague lasting three years around 1617, probably introduced by foreign traders along the 200 miles of the Northeast Coast.

When John Winthrop arrived in what is now "Manchester-By-The-Sea", in 1630, Masconomet paddled out to the "Arabella" to greet the white settlers. He was very friendly and was able to converse in English even though his native tongue was Algonquin.

By 1638, the dwindled tribe existed mostly in the Ipswich area. Masconomet sold his land that year to John Winthrop, Jr., for 20 pounds, English. Six years later, he requested instruction in Christian ways and accepted protection by the Massachusetts Bay Colony under a signed agreement.

He was given 6 acres of planting ground in 1655. Three years later on March 6, 1658, he died. He was buried with his gun and tomahawk atop Sagamore Hill, one of the highest and most significant hills in the area.

A few years later, his remains were disturbed by a group of Ipswich youths who were immediately arrested, reprimanded and made to do penance. The bones were returned to the hilltop gravesite.



This gravesite provides the public an awareness of long ago people, an interest in Native American ways and displays the historical significance of the Agawams, giving our children and generations to come, a place to think and reflect in perfect harmony in a natural setting.

In 1910, a stone was inscribed and placed there by friends. In 1959, the Hamilton Historical Society's curator, H. Daley, the Boy Scouts and Air Force personnel cleared the 4000+ square foot site given to the Town of Hamilton by Judge Standish Bradford.

In 1971, a memorial service by the Disabled American Veterans, under the direction of Robert Hagopian, was held and a larger stone monument was erected, but not until November 1993, was the gravesite consecrated by both Christian and Native American rituals.

In Native American belief, when one changes worlds their spirit stays with the body and then goes as one to meet the Great Creator. When the burial site was desecrated, as by the delinquent Ipswich youths, the Indians believe the spirit of the person is called back to Earth to forever roam, looking for its bones. Once found, they will not rest until a proper burial ceremony is performed by its own people.

Thus, for 335 years, Masconomet's spirit has been roaming uneasily among us!

In the traditional way of their people, Oee-tash, Chief of the Ponkapoag People of the Massachusetts Nation, performed the Sacred Ceremony amidst a tremendous feeling of expectancy and thankfulness on Saturday, November 6, 1993.

The oneness of Masconomet, Sachem of the Agawams, is once again at peaceful rest among us at the top of Sagamore Hill.

**TABUTNAY KNETOPS!**

**THANK YOU, FRIENDS!**